



Pet Cruelty or Neglect

Animal cruelty is not only wrong — It is a crime and against the law in the state of California! Animal abuse can also be part of a pattern of other violent acts within families and society. Abuse of any kind should be reported to the appropriate authorities immediately.

What constitutes animal cruelty? Animal cruelty occurs when someone intentionally injures or harms an animal or when a person willfully deprives an animal of food, water or necessary medical care. Here are some signs that may indicate abuse or neglect:

- Tick or flea infestations
- Wounds on the body
- Patches of missing hair
- Extremely thin, hungry animal
- Limping
- An owner striking or otherwise physically abusing an animal
- Dogs who are repeatedly left alone without food and water, and often chained in a yard
- Dogs who have been hit by cars—or are showing any of the signs listed here—and have not been taken to a veterinarian
- Dogs who are kept outside without shelter in extreme weather conditions
- Animals who cower in fear or act aggressively when approached by their owners

There's an animal in my neighborhood who isn't being cared for properly—is that cruelty? Yes, it is. You don't have to hit an animal to be cruel to him—depriving an animal of food, water or necessary medical care is neglect, which is a form of cruelty.



**City of Long Beach
Animal Care Services Bureau**
7700 E. Spring Street
Long Beach, CA 90815

Phone: (562) 570-PETS Fax: (562) 570-3053

www.longbeach.gov/acs



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State of California Penal Code

597 — Animal Cruelty and Neglect

Depending on the severity of the violation every person who maliciously, intentionally, or though neglect inflicts pain, injury, or suffering on an animal, is guilty of an offense. **These offenses can range from an infraction, misdemeanor, or felony.**

Fines can range up to:

- Infraction (\$1,000);
- Misdemeanor (\$20,000)
- Felony (\$50,000)

Imprisonment can range up to:

- Misdemeanor (1 Year)
- Felony (3 Years)

Dealing with the Animal Cruelty Issue

Report Animal Cruelty

If you witness or suspect animal cruelty, you should contact Animal Care Services immediately at 562-570-PETS(7387):

- When reporting suspected animal cruelty, residents should provide their address, a description of the pet and the owner, the address of the owner if known, the date(s) and time of the incident(s).
- Documenting the incident with photographs and videotape can be very helpful in prosecution. If such cruelty is not witnessed directly but is suspected, Animal Care Service's should be notified. Reports of animal cruelty should be as detailed as possible. Dates, times and circumstances should be noted and related to Animal Care Service's, who should also be made aware of any physical evidence (photos, video, etc.).
- A person reporting animal cruelty need not be concerned with confidentiality. An investigating officer will not identify the source of the complaint. Should the keeper of the animal be prosecuted, witnesses may be called to testify, but the immediate condition of the animal should outweigh concerns about having to testify months from now.
- California veterinarians are required by law to report any suspected cruelty or neglect immediately to Animal Care Services.

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